

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
McALLEN DIVISION

LIZELLE GONZALEZ) (
Plaintiff) (
) (
VS.) (CIVIL ACTION NO.
) (7:24-cv-00132
GOCHA ALLEN RAMIREZ,) (
ALEXANDRIA LYNN BARRERA,) (
RENE FUENTES, and STARR) (
COUNTY, TEXAS) (
Defendants) (

ORAL AND VIDEOTAPED DEPOSITION OF
LIZELLE GONZALEZ
FEBRUARY 13, 2025

ORAL AND VIDEOTAPED DEPOSITION OF LIZELLE GONZALEZ, produced as a witness at the instance of the Defendants, taken in the above-styled and numbered cause on FEBRUARY 13, 2025, between the hours of 10:10 a.m. and 1:51 p.m., reported stenographically by DONNA McCOWN, Certified Court Reporter No. 6625, in and for the State of Texas, at Garza Martinez, PLLC, 202 East Sprague Street, Edinburg, Texas, pursuant to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and any provisions stated on the record or attached therein.

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

10:15 1 wasn't enough. Can you explain what you mean by that?

10:16 2 A. I can't explain. I mean --

10:16 3 Q. I'm sorry?

10:16 4 A. I mean, I don't think I can explain.

10:16 5 Q. Okay.

10:16 6 A. I wouldn't have an explanation for you now,
10:16 7 so -- but you had -- what was the last question you
10:16 8 had, I'm sorry, just right now?

10:16 9 Q. I was -- I was trying to understand your
10:16 10 explanation that it wasn't enough, what you meant by
10:16 11 that when you -- when I asked you why you decided to
10:16 12 sue District Attorney Ramirez.

10:16 13 Part of your answer was it wasn't enough,
10:16 14 and I was trying to get -- to understand what you meant
10:16 15 by that.

10:16 16 A. So are you asking me why I did it
10:16 17 individually --

10:16 18 Q. Yes.

10:16 19 A. -- or why I did it entirely, like why I just
10:16 20 chose to move forward?

10:16 21 Q. My first question is about suing the district
10:16 22 attorney individually.

10:16 23 A. Individually?

10:16 24 Q. Yes.

10:16 25 A. Okay. So I -- I thought about it for a while

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

10:16 1 after my arrest. And when the sanction came in is when
10:16 2 I -- not that I got the motivation, but I knew that
10:17 3 there was something that I know that I wasn't wrong and
10:17 4 that he was.

10:17 5 Q. And when you say "sanction," what do you mean
10:17 6 by that?

10:17 7 A. When he was sanctioned by the Bar.

10:17 8 Q. The State Bar?

10:17 9 A. Yes.

10:17 10 Q. Okay. You also sued Assistant District
10:17 11 Attorney Alex Barrera?

10:17 12 A. Uh-huh.

10:17 13 Q. And I have the same question. Why did you
10:17 14 decide to sue her individually?

10:17 15 A. Why?

10:17 16 Q. Yes, why?

10:17 17 A. Same thing. I mean...

10:17 18 Q. Well, she -- she wasn't sanctioned by the Bar,
10:17 19 was she?

10:17 20 A. No.

10:17 21 Q. Okay.

10:17 22 A. Not that I know of.

10:17 23 Q. All right. So when you say "same thing," help
10:17 24 me understand what you mean by that.

10:17 25 A. Okay. So Alexandria, to my knowledge, why she

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

10:35 1 gobbled up --

10:35 2 A. Yeah.

10:35 3 Q. -- if we talk over each other.

10:35 4 You mentioned because he made the press
10:35 5 release he knew that the -- the charge against you
10:35 6 wasn't going to stand, right?

10:35 7 A. Not only because of the press release, because
10:35 8 he personally -- like not personally, like he himself
10:35 9 told me that it had been a mistake. It had fallen out
10:35 10 of his hands, and he didn't know what happened.

10:35 11 Q. And when did he tell you that?

10:35 12 A. The Sunday after I got out of jail.

10:35 13 Q. So he didn't speak to you at any time prior to
10:35 14 you being arrested, did --

10:35 15 A. No.

10:35 16 Q. -- he?

10:35 17 A. No.

10:35 18 Q. Okay. And you understand that the grand jury
10:35 19 presentation was before you got arrested?

10:36 20 A. Yes.

10:36 21 Q. All right. You said that he told you it was a
10:36 22 mistake?

10:36 23 A. Yes. It was out of his hands. He was out of
10:36 24 town, and he didn't know what had happened were the
10:36 25 nature of his words.

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

10:40 1 there was nothing that I could tell you, oh I, knew
10:40 2 this was going to happen to me, because I didn't.

10:40 3 MS. ALBIN: Objection, nonresponsive.

10:40 4 Q. I want to focus on the period of time before
10:40 5 you were arrested. Okay?

10:40 6 A. Okay.

10:40 7 Q. All right. Not after you're arrested. I know
10:40 8 there was news releases and it was high profile at that
10:40 9 time. But I'm talking about before the arrest. All
10:40 10 right?

10:40 11 A. Okay.

10:40 12 Q. Can you tell us any actions that Mr. Ramirez
10:40 13 took other than being the DA of the county --

10:40 14 A. No.

10:40 15 Q. Sorry. Let me finish the question. Let me get
10:41 16 the question out, then you can answer.

10:41 17 Before the arrest, are there any actions
10:41 18 of District Attorney Ramirez that you can describe that
10:41 19 he took that make you believe he knew the presentation
10:41 20 was going to be before the grand jury and was a
10:41 21 mistake?

10:41 22 A. No.

10:41 23 Q. Okay. Do you understand that the reason -- the
10:41 24 stated reason for the dismissal of the criminal charges
10:41 25 against you was that the Penal Code has an exception

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

10:43 1 have that leads you to believe that District Attorney
10:43 2 Ramirez knew before you were arrested that there was
10:43 3 this exception in the Penal Code statute for mothers
10:43 4 who have caused the death of their unborn child?

10:43 5 A. I believe he was told that it wasn't, like, a
10:43 6 prosecutable thing. But can I prove it to you? I
10:43 7 probably can't. I mean, it was just -- I was -- it was
10:43 8 when everything had happened, and I was told that he
10:43 9 had prosecuted knowing that -- they had already told
10:43 10 him or something that it wasn't going to go through,
10:43 11 and they followed through.

10:43 12 Q. Okay. Who told you that?

10:43 13 A. I spoke to Martie Vela? Garcia-Vela?
10:44 14 Garcia-Vela. Martie.

10:44 15 Q. Martie Garcia-Vela?

10:44 16 A. Yes. She's an attorney.

10:44 17 Q. When did you talk to Ms. Vela?

10:44 18 A. After Mr. Ramirez's sanction, after the news
10:44 19 came out.

10:44 20 Q. And Ms. Vela told you that District Attorney
10:44 21 Ramirez knew prior to you being arrested that there was
10:44 22 this exception in the Penal Code statute?

10:44 23 A. Yes.

10:44 24 Q. Was that a phone conversation?

10:44 25 A. Yes.

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

10:55 1 going back a little bit. The grand jury convened
10:56 2 before you were arrested, correct?

10:56 3 A. Yes.

10:56 4 Q. And you allege in your lawsuit that there were
10:56 5 misrepresentations that were made in front of the grand
10:56 6 jury. Do you understand that?

10:56 7 A. Uh-huh.

10:56 8 Q. Okay.

10:56 9 A. Yes. Sorry.

10:56 10 Q. That's okay. What are the misrepresentations
10:56 11 that you believe Ms. Barrera made in front of the grand
10:56 12 jury?

10:56 13 A. Well, they accused me of murder. So I don't
10:56 14 know how the presentation to the jury was, but I mean,
10:56 15 it was enough to charge me as a murderer and make the
10:56 16 grand jury believe that she's a murderer, let's indict
10:56 17 her.

10:56 18 Q. Do you have any information about anything
10:56 19 specifically that Ms. Barrera said in front of the
10:56 20 grand jury?

10:56 21 A. No.

10:56 22 Q. You don't know what was said in front of --

10:56 23 A. Yes --

10:56 24 Q. -- the grand jury?

10:56 25 A. -- not that I know of.

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

10:56 1 Q. Okay. Sorry. We talked over each other a
10:57 2 little bit. Let me just make sure that question is
10:57 3 clear.

10:57 4 You don't know what was said by Assistant
10:57 5 District Attorney Barrera to the grand jury, do you?

10:57 6 A. No.

10:57 7 Q. And I -- I just want to make sure this part is
10:57 8 clear too, because we've gone back and forth a little
10:57 9 bit. Do you believe District Attorney Ramirez made any
10:57 10 presentations to the grand jury about your case?

10:57 11 A. Not that I know of.

10:57 12 Q. Okay. So then is it fair to say you don't know
10:57 13 of anything that he said to the grand jury because he
10:57 14 wasn't there?

10:57 15 A. He said he was out of town.

10:57 16 Q. So he didn't say anything to the grand jury,
10:57 17 did he?

10:57 18 A. No. He said he wasn't here when it was
10:57 19 presented.

10:57 20 Q. And you believe that?

10:57 21 A. I don't know what to believe from him.

10:57 22 Q. But do you have any reason not to believe that?

10:57 23 A. I mean -- no. Like he was actually there? I
10:58 24 can't tell you, yeah, he was there; yeah, I've been
10:58 25 told he was there. No.

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

10:58 1 Q. Okay. And do you have any reason to believe
10:58 2 that he had his assistant take materials or anything in
10:58 3 to the grand jury?

10:58 4 A. I don't know what was taken to the grand jury.

10:58 5 Q. Okay. So you don't know anything about what he
10:58 6 may have said or not said or sent to the grand jury, do
10:58 7 you?

10:58 8 A. No.

10:58 9 Q. All right. So the allegation against
10:58 10 Mr. Ramirez and Ms. Barrera that they basically lied to
10:58 11 the grand jury is based on the fact that a murder
10:58 12 charge was presented; is that fair?

10:58 13 A. Yeah. Yes.

10:58 14 Q. And there's no other reason that you can say
10:58 15 that you believe they made misrepresentations to the
10:58 16 grand jury?

10:58 17 A. No.

10:58 18 Q. What actions, if any, do you believe Assistant
10:59 19 District Attorney Barrera engaged in as part of the
10:59 20 investigation? So this is going back before the grand
10:59 21 jury even.

10:59 22 What actions do you think she took that
10:59 23 caused her to be involved in your -- in the
10:59 24 investigation?

10:59 25 A. Sheriff's office and the DA's office work

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:02 1 A. No.

11:02 2 Q. Okay. I have the same question about District
11:02 3 Attorney Ramirez. What specific acts did he -- or
11:02 4 actions did he take that make you believe he was
11:02 5 involved in the investigation?

11:03 6 A. Ms. Muniz telling me that she was going to
11:03 7 speak to the DA's office after concluding my interview.

11:03 8 Q. And you don't know if she ever spoke to anybody
11:03 9 in the DA's office?

11:03 10 A. I don't know.

11:03 11 Q. And you don't know if she ever spoke to
11:03 12 Mr. Ramirez directly?

11:03 13 A. I don't know.

11:03 14 Q. Is that the only reason that you believe that
11:03 15 the district attorney had any involvement in your
11:03 16 investigation?

11:03 17 A. Can you repeat that?

11:03 18 Q. The fact that Ms. Muniz, the investigator in
11:03 19 the sheriff's office, said she was going to talk to
11:03 20 someone in the DA's office, is that the only reason
11:03 21 that you believe District Attorney Ramirez was involved
11:03 22 in the investigation?

11:03 23 A. That -- I think he's involved in all
11:03 24 investigations.

11:03 25 Q. In what way?

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:04 1 A. They work together. They work hand in hand.

11:04 2 Q. What -- what actions does Mr. Ramirez take in
11:04 3 investigations?

11:04 4 A. They publicize it in every press release that
11:04 5 they work hand in hand in their investigations.

11:04 6 Q. And as you sit here today, can you describe any
11:04 7 actions that you believe Mr. Ramirez takes in these
11:04 8 investigations?

11:04 9 A. No.

11:04 10 Q. He didn't interview you, right?

11:04 11 A. No.

11:04 12 Q. And do you know whether he ever went out to the
11:04 13 hospital to interview anybody?

11:04 14 A. No.

11:04 15 Q. Do you know whether he ever had any
11:04 16 communications with any investigators in the sheriff's
11:04 17 office about your case?

11:04 18 A. No.

11:04 19 Q. Do you know whether he ever talked to Sheriff
11:04 20 Fuentes about your case?

11:04 21 A. No.

11:04 22 Q. And what about Ms. Barrera? Do you know
11:04 23 whether she ever talked to any investigators in the
11:04 24 sheriff's office about your case?

11:05 25 A. Not that I know of.

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:06 1 Q. Do you know whether District Attorney Ramirez
11:07 2 ever provided any legal advice to investigators in the
11:07 3 sheriff's office about your case?

11:07 4 A. Like a lawyer, not a DA? Is that what you're
11:07 5 asking me?

11:07 6 Q. I'm asking you if you know of whether or not
11:07 7 the district attorney ever gave legal advice to any of
11:07 8 the investigators, anyone in the sheriff's office who
11:07 9 was investigating your case?

11:07 10 A. Not that I know of.

11:07 11 Q. What about Ms. Barrera? Do you know whether
11:07 12 she ever gave legal advice to any investigators or
11:07 13 anyone in the sheriff's office about your case?

11:07 14 A. Not that I can remember.

11:07 15 Q. Do you know whether anybody in the district
11:07 16 attorney's office ever gave legal advice or guidance to
11:07 17 someone in the sheriff's office about your case?

11:07 18 A. Not that I -- that I know of, no.

11:07 19 Q. Do you have any reason to believe that District
11:08 20 Attorney Ramirez directed the investigators to
11:08 21 investigate you for murder?

11:08 22 A. No, no.

11:08 23 Q. Do you have any reason to believe that
11:08 24 Ms. Barrera directed the investigators to investigate
11:08 25 you for murder?

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:11 1 Attorney Ramirez, and Assistant District Attorney
11:11 2 Barrera had met to discuss how the presentation to the
11:11 3 grand jury was going to go?

11:11 4 A. No. I wouldn't know.

11:11 5 Q. So you don't have any reason to believe that
11:12 6 they were conspiring to do something in front of the
11:12 7 grand jury related to your case, do you?

11:12 8 A. Well, they were -- I know that they were
11:12 9 working together during the investigation.

11:12 10 Q. Okay. Well, I just -- I had just gotten done
11:12 11 asking you what you knew about them being involved in
11:12 12 the investigation, and I understood your testimony to
11:12 13 be you didn't know anything about what they did during
11:12 14 the investigation.

11:12 15 So if that's not true, then I want to know
11:12 16 what it is you know about their role in the
11:12 17 investigation.

11:12 18 A. I mentioned prior to that -- I know that
11:12 19 somewhere I mentioned that they -- they publically
11:12 20 speak on working together.

11:12 21 Q. Did they ever publically speak about working
11:12 22 together on your case?

11:12 23 A. No.

11:12 24 Q. So I'm only --

11:12 25 A. I mean --

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:26 1 co-conspirator Assistant District Attorney Defendant
11:26 2 Barrera, to provide false information and conceal the
11:26 3 plain statutory language contained in the Penal Code
11:26 4 from the grand jury.

11:26 5 Do you understand that's an allegation
11:26 6 you've made in the lawsuit?

11:26 7 A. Can you rephrase that to where I can understand
11:26 8 it in nonlegal terms?

11:26 9 Q. I'm -- I'm just reading what's alleged in the
11:26 10 lawsuit. Okay?

11:26 11 A. I understand, but it's very legal to what I
11:26 12 know.

11:26 13 Q. I'll summarize, and your counsel can object if
11:26 14 they don't feel I've correctly summarized. But
11:26 15 basically, this allegation is that District Attorney
11:26 16 Ramirez directed Assistant District Attorney Barrera to
11:26 17 provide false information to the grand jury.

11:26 18 So let's start with that question. Do you
11:26 19 know of specifically anything that Defendant Ramirez
11:26 20 did to direct Ms. Barrera to provide false information
11:27 21 to the grand jury?

11:27 22 A. Specifically, no. I mean, other than his
11:27 23 sanction -- than his sanction, no.

11:27 24 Q. And do you know of anything he specifically did
11:27 25 to direct Ms. Barrera about concealing that exception

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:27 1 that we talked about earlier in the Penal Code for the
11:27 2 mother of an unborn -- mother of an unborn child? Do
11:27 3 you have any information about what it is you believe
11:27 4 he did to direct Ms. Barrera in concealing that
11:27 5 exception?

11:27 6 A. Not that I know of.

11:27 7 Q. In fact, do you know whether he talked to her
11:27 8 at all about the case before it went to the grand jury?

11:27 9 A. No.

11:27 10 Q. Okay. And you don't know whether the grand
11:27 11 jury was presented with that exception in the Penal
11:27 12 Code or not, do you?

11:27 13 A. I -- like I mentioned before, I don't know what
11:28 14 was presented.

11:28 15 Q. Okay. You provided to the defendants through
11:28 16 the discovery process some names of people who you
11:28 17 believe have information about the lawsuit. Okay? So
11:28 18 I'm going to ask you about some of those people.

11:28 19 Gloria Gonzalez, I understand you to
11:28 20 testify that's your mother?

11:28 21 A. Yes.

11:28 22 Q. What is it that you believe she knows about the
11:28 23 claims in your lawsuit?

11:28 24 A. The phone call with -- between Raul, my
11:28 25 stepfather, and Mr. Ramirez.

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:36 1 or if it was even true, right?

11:36 2 A. No.

11:36 3 Q. What about -- I think she's a former assistant
11:36 4 district attorney -- Hilda Garza? What does she know
11:36 5 about your case?

11:36 6 A. I've never spoken to her, so...

11:36 7 Q. Okay. She was identified as a person who
11:36 8 provided information about what the district attorneys
11:36 9 knew about your case, but you don't know anything about
11:36 10 that?

11:36 11 A. Yes. She -- okay. So backtracking to when I
11:36 12 spoke to Martie, that was a name that was mentioned,
11:37 13 that she was the one who told Mr. Ramirez. And I'm
11:37 14 not -- like I said, when I spoke to her, it was "they,"
11:37 15 which is referring to me, it's referring to
11:37 16 Mr. Ramirez, Ms. Barrera.

11:37 17 I believe Ms. Hilda was the one that
11:37 18 disclosed to Martie that -- I don't know if they -- she
11:37 19 disclosed everything to her. But when I spoke to
11:37 20 Martie, it was Hilda had told them this and this, that
11:37 21 it wasn't prosecutable.

11:37 22 Q. Okay. And did you know that Hilda Garza wasn't
11:37 23 employed at the DA's office at the time of your
11:37 24 investigation and arrest?

11:37 25 A. No.

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:37 1 Q. You didn't know that?

11:37 2 A. No. The only -- to -- the only background I
11:37 3 know of Ms. Garza was that previously she was an
11:37 4 employee at one point. I don't know when.

11:37 5 Q. So you don't know if, in fact, Ms. Garza ever
11:37 6 really did tell District Attorney Ramirez or Assistant
11:38 7 District Attorney Barrera that the case was not
11:38 8 prosecutable, to use your word? You don't know if that
11:38 9 conversation ever really happened, do you?

11:38 10 A. No.

11:38 11 Q. Okay.

11:38 12 A. I don't. That would be a question for
11:38 13 Ms. Hilda and Ms. Martie.

11:38 14 Q. And you've never spoken to Ms. Hilda Garza
11:38 15 before?

11:38 16 A. No.

11:38 17 Q. Sorry if I already asked you this, but have you
11:38 18 ever met Assistant District Attorney Barrera?

11:39 19 A. Never.

11:39 20 Q. Have you ever had a phone conversation with
11:39 21 her, exchanged any kind of messages?

11:39 22 A. Never.

11:39 23 Q. Do you have any opinion about whether she had a
11:39 24 personal interest in your case?

11:39 25 A. I -- I didn't know who Ms. Barrera was until

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:48 1 "With respect to" -- that's short for paragraph -- "4.4
11:49 2 of plaintiff's FAC" -- is first amended complaint.
11:49 3 That's the lawsuit. Okay?

11:49 4 A. Uh-huh.

11:49 5 Q. You were asked to state the basis for your
11:49 6 allegation that Sheriff Fuentes or someone in the
11:49 7 sheriff's office in connection with and/or under the
11:49 8 joint supervision of Defendant Barrera conducted an
11:49 9 investigation into plaintiff, you, your conduct.

11:49 10 A. Uh-huh.

11:49 11 Q. Okay. And you see there's an objection.
11:49 12 There's an answer below that?

11:49 13 A. Uh-huh.

11:49 14 Q. Okay. Did you -- did you write this answer?

11:49 15 A. No.

11:49 16 Q. Have you seen --

11:49 17 A. I mean, yeah, I've seen this before.

11:49 18 Q. You've seen this before? Okay.

11:49 19 A. No, I didn't write it.

11:49 20 Q. Okay. That's fine. So I'm going to ask you --

11:49 21 A. I reviewed these before.

11:49 22 Q. Okay. And this -- you understand this is your
11:50 23 answer to this question?

11:50 24 A. Yes.

11:50 25 Q. Okay. So in the answer section, it says -- on

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:50 1 three -- about three lines down, "Plaintiff's
11:50 2 allegation that Sheriff Fuentes or someone in the
11:50 3 sheriff's office in connection with and under the joint
11:50 4 supervision of Defendant Barrera conducted an
11:50 5 investigation of plaintiff's conduct is based on public
11:50 6 statements made by Defendant Ramirez and his office and
11:50 7 assistant district attorney's work in coordination with
11:50 8 the sheriff and his office during the investigation
11:50 9 process."

11:50 10 Do you see that sentence that I just read?

11:50 11 A. Uh-huh, yeah. Can I have a pen?

11:50 12 Q. That's going to go to the court reporter.

11:51 13 A. Okay. That's fine.

11:51 14 Q. Your attorney may want to mark up theirs and
11:51 15 maybe share with you, but --

11:51 16 MS. GARZA: Yeah, let's -- let's do that
11:51 17 and put the exhibit down. Let me just grab -- we don't
11:51 18 have to go off the record. Just give me a -- give me a
11:51 19 sec.

11:51 20 THE WITNESS: Do you want a pen? There's
11:51 21 a pen.

11:51 22 MS. GARZA: Yeah, but I don't want you to
11:51 23 get unplugged. And you can give us yours and you can
11:51 24 have ours. And I'll write all over this one.

11:51 25 Q. Okay. The -- the statement that I just read in

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:51 1 your answer to this interrogatory, do you see where I
11:51 2 was at?

11:51 3 A. "In connection with or under," right?

11:51 4 Q. Yes. All right. And you reference here public
11:51 5 statements made by Defendant Ramirez that his office
11:52 6 and assistant district attorney's work in coordination
11:52 7 with the sheriff and his office during the
11:52 8 investigation process.

11:52 9 A. Yes.

11:52 10 Q. Is there a specific statement that you were
11:52 11 referring to when you gave this answer?

11:52 12 A. There's several statements.

11:52 13 Q. Okay. Do -- can you recall any of those?

11:52 14 A. The -- the press release -- the press releases
11:52 15 that they gave -- they gave -- they released one --
11:52 16 they've released several. Mine is like the rest of
11:52 17 them.

11:52 18 I can't recall if mine says that they
11:52 19 worked hand in hand, but most of them do. At the very
11:52 20 end of their press releases they state that.

11:52 21 Q. When you say "mine," what are you talking
11:52 22 about?

11:52 23 A. There's a press release about my arrest.
11:52 24 There's a press release for each arrest -- well, not
11:52 25 each, but the ones that they make public. And at the

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:52 1 very end of the press releases, they state that they
11:52 2 work together. I don't know if you've ever reviewed
11:52 3 any.

11:52 4 Q. Is there -- and I think you -- I think you've
11:53 5 produced those, but there's no statement -- or is there
11:53 6 a statement that Defendant Ramirez released publically
11:53 7 saying that in your case he worked with the sheriff's
11:53 8 office?

11:53 9 A. I would have to go back into the press release.

11:53 10 Q. Okay. And was there only one?

11:53 11 A. Yeah.

11:53 12 Q. Okay. And is that -- was that press release
11:53 13 made after the charge was dismissed?

11:53 14 A. It was released the day I spoke to Mr. Ramirez
11:53 15 in his office. And I think my charge was dismissed
11:53 16 like the following day.

11:53 17 Q. Okay. And this says -- the next sentence,
11:53 18 "Murder indictments are rare in Starr County;
11:54 19 therefore, the DA, ADAs, DA investigators, sheriff and
11:54 20 his investigators would have worked together throughout
11:54 21 each phase given its rare, serious, and potential
11:54 22 high-profile nature."

11:54 23 But I think you've testified that you
11:54 24 don't have any information about whether the sheriff,
11:54 25 the district attorney, the assistant district attorney,

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

11:54 1 or any of the investigators actually worked together on
11:54 2 your case, do you?

11:54 3 A. Can you rephrase that?

11:54 4 MS. ALBIN: Can you read that back.

11:54 5 Sorry.

11:54 6 (Requested portion was read back.)

11:55 7 A. I don't understand the question. Do I have
11:55 8 any -- okay. So I'm going to rephrase it. I -- do I
11:55 9 have anything that -- do I -- what was it? I'm sorry.
11:55 10 Because I said rephrase, not repeat, like better words
11:55 11 that I would understand.

11:55 12 Q. You don't know whether the -- the district
11:55 13 attorney, the assistant district attorney,
11:55 14 investigators in the DA's office, or the sheriff's
11:55 15 office, or the sheriff actually worked together on your
11:55 16 case, do you?

11:55 17 A. No, I don't.

11:55 18 Q. Okay. I hope that was a little better. Do my
11:55 19 best.

11:55 20 A. Doing good. That's okay. For the most part I
11:55 21 do understand, but there's just some things.

11:55 22 Q. And I am now on Interrogatory No. 2. It's --
11:56 23 kind of starts at the bottom of --

11:56 24 A. Oh, I see.

11:56 25 Q. And then the answer carries over to the next

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

12:00 1 Q. Okay. And in any of those public statements
12:00 2 have you seen something that says the district attorney
12:00 3 is required to have discussions with assistant district
12:00 4 attorneys prior to a potential murder indictment being
12:00 5 presented --

12:00 6 A. That it is required?

12:00 7 Q. Yes.

12:00 8 A. No, not that I know of, no.

12:00 9 Q. Do you know anything about a policy that would
12:01 10 require District Attorney Ramirez to approve of a
12:01 11 potential murder indictment being presented to the
12:01 12 grand jury?

12:01 13 A. If -- of a policy, no.

12:01 14 Q. So the -- the only reason that you gave this
12:01 15 answer is this general public statements about working
12:01 16 together on cases; is that true?

12:01 17 A. Yeah, they make public statements.

12:01 18 Q. But there's no other reason that you put in
12:01 19 your answer here that the -- it's the policy, practice,
12:01 20 and custom of the Starr County DA's office that they're
12:01 21 required to have discussions with and approval of
12:01 22 Defendant Ramirez on potential murder indictments?
12:01 23 You -- you don't have any specific reason that you
12:01 24 stated that other than press releases that say they
12:01 25 work together, right?

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

12:01 1 A. Uh-huh. Yes.

12:01 2 Q. Okay. And you're not aware of any requirement
12:02 3 that Defendant Ramirez imposed on the assistant
12:02 4 district attorneys to get his approval before the
12:02 5 murder indictment that was brought against you was
12:02 6 taken to the grand jury, do you?

12:02 7 A. Can you rephrase your question?

12:02 8 Q. Sure. Do you know if Defendant Ramirez
12:02 9 required Assistant District Attorney Barrera to seek
12:02 10 his approval prior to going to the grand jury on your
12:02 11 case?

12:02 12 A. I wouldn't be able to tell you yes or no. Like
12:02 13 I wouldn't know.

12:02 14 Q. Okay.

12:02 15 A. I know that when I spoke to him, one of his
12:02 16 statements was, "It's out of my hands." And he went
12:02 17 like that.

12:02 18 Q. Did that suggest to you that he didn't know?

12:02 19 A. At the time, I didn't know what to believe, so
12:03 20 I just took his -- whatever he said, I just said,
12:03 21 "Okay. Thank you," and I walked out.

12:03 22 So I did take away what he said, like I
12:03 23 know -- I do remember what he said, and I -- it does --
12:03 24 like I know what he did say. But at the time when
12:03 25 everything was going on, like I mentioned, I just took

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

12:04 1 A. I don't know.

12:04 2 Q. Okay.

12:04 3 A. I think the dismissal came up in, like, 12 --
12:04 4 less than 12 hours after being released, so I wouldn't
12:05 5 know if they had conversation then.

12:05 6 Q. But you -- and you don't know if they had any
12:05 7 conversations before it went to the grand jury, do you?

12:05 8 A. No.

12:05 9 Q. Okay. If you go to Interrogatory No. 4.

12:05 10 A. Uh-huh.

12:05 11 Q. This asks for the basis of your contention that
12:05 12 Defendant Barrera was in direct communication with the
12:05 13 Starr County Sheriff's Office investigators providing
12:05 14 legal advice during the investigation.

12:05 15 Do you see that? Sorry. Is that yes?

12:05 16 A. Yes.

12:05 17 Q. Okay. And in the answer six lines down --
12:05 18 actually, let me back up.

12:05 19 Starting about three lines down,
12:05 20 "Plaintiff's contention that Defendant Barrera was in
12:06 21 direct communication with Starr County Sheriff's Office
12:06 22 investigators providing legal advice during the
12:06 23 investigation is based on a general knowledge and
12:06 24 understanding of the custom and practice of assistant
12:06 25 district attorneys, including Defendant Barrera's

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

12:09 1 A. Huh-uh.

12:09 2 Q. Do you know whether he called Defendant Ramirez
12:09 3 directly?

12:09 4 A. I don't know, no.

12:09 5 Q. And do you know whether he reached out to
12:09 6 Assistant District Attorney Barrera directly?

12:09 7 A. I wouldn't know.

12:09 8 Q. Okay. And you don't know whether anybody at
12:09 9 the hospital ever contacted Sheriff Fuentes directly
12:09 10 about your case, do you?

12:09 11 A. I wouldn't know.

12:09 12 Q. And you also don't know whether anybody at the
12:10 13 hospital contacted Defendant Ramirez directly about
12:10 14 your case, do you?

12:10 15 A. No.

12:10 16 Q. And same question about Assistant District
12:10 17 Attorney Barrera. You don't know whether anybody at
12:10 18 the hospital ever reached out to her directly, do you?

12:10 19 A. I wouldn't know.

12:10 20 Q. Okay. I want you to -- if you would turn to
12:11 21 Interrogatory No. 7.

12:11 22 A. Uh-huh.

12:11 23 Q. And this asks about the basis for your claim
12:11 24 that Defendant Barrera commenced and continued an
12:11 25 unfounded investigation followed by providing the grand

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

12:17 1 (Brief recess)

12:19 2 Q. Okay. Ms. Gonzalez, I'm going to pass you what
12:19 3 I'm marking as Exhibit 2 to today's deposition. And,
12:19 4 again, if you would --

12:19 5 MS. GARZA: We'll switch them.

12:19 6 Q. Yeah. Do us a favor and not mark that if you
12:19 7 need it.

12:19 8 These are -- this document is Plaintiff's
12:19 9 Corrected Responses and Objections to Defendant Gocha
12:19 10 Allen Ramirez's First Set of Interrogatories and First
12:19 11 Set of Production.

12:19 12 A. Uh-huh.

12:19 13 Q. Some of the questions I'm going to ask you will
12:19 14 sound similar to what we just went through with
12:19 15 Assistant District Attorney Barrera, but these are
12:19 16 specific to District Attorney Ramirez. Do you
12:19 17 understand that?

12:19 18 A. Yes.

12:19 19 Q. Okay. Have you seen this document before?

12:19 20 A. Uh-huh.

12:19 21 Q. Sorry. Is that --

12:19 22 A. Yes.

12:19 23 Q. Okay. And I think you've testified at length
12:20 24 about this today, but just to make sure, other than the
12:20 25 press releases that talk about the district attorney's

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366

12:20 1 office and the sheriff's office working together, do
12:20 2 you have any reason to believe that Defendant Ramirez
12:20 3 investigated your case?

12:20 4 A. That he investigated? No, I don't think so.
12:20 5 That he -- my case specifically, I wouldn't know, no.
12:20 6 I mean, as per Mr. Ramirez's word was that he didn't
12:20 7 know, I mean, but...

12:20 8 Q. And that suggests that he didn't investigate
12:20 9 it, right?

12:20 10 A. Uh-huh. I mean, he said he didn't know in
12:21 11 general about the -- not in general about the case, but
12:21 12 I wasn't -- I'm not sure what he was referring to, but
12:21 13 as far as his knowledge at the time was that he didn't
12:21 14 know what had happened.

12:21 15 Q. Okay. And did anything about that conversation
12:21 16 make you believe he was involved in the investigation?

12:21 17 A. No.

12:21 18 Q. And there's nothing else that you can point to
12:21 19 that makes you believe he was involved in the
12:21 20 investigation, right?

12:21 21 MS. GARZA: Objection.

12:21 22 A. In the investigation?

12:21 23 Q. Correct.

12:21 24 A. I mean, no, not that I know of, that I can
12:21 25 recall.

BRYANT & STINGLEY, INC.

Harlingen (956) 428-0755

McAllen (956) 618-2366